

KARO-ECHO Membership Meeting

August 10, 2020

via Zoom

[No minutes were taken at July 2020 meeting.]

Attendees

NI6A	Don Simon
KJ6AAT	David Swanson
KE6BEE	Howdy Goudey
KN6BUY	Tom Fattaruso
KN6CMP	Blake Yeaman
KN6CMR	Susan Yeaman
KK6GIO	Larry Vanselow
KM6HFT	Curt Smith
KK6NDF	Hal Graboske
KC6OBK	Marian Gade
KM6UBY	Edward Carney
KK6RED	Diane Richwine
K6RJM	Rob McNicholas
KJ6SWK	Annette McCoubrey
KM6TCB	Dave Roth
KM6UCF	Natalie DeJarlais
KJ6WSS	Jay Fenton
KK6ZPM	Karen Leong Fenton
	Chris Hilliard

Training: Message Center Management

Presented by Don Simon, NI6A

Use GMRS channels 1-7 for the ICP (Incident Command Post), as they use higher power.
Use channels 8-14 within the neighborhood.

If we're short on personnel, focus on communication and worry about paperwork later. If there's sufficient staffing, complete the paperwork.

Use a headset when possible when in the field, as it helps mitigate distractions.

Bring a book to the message center.. You could be overwhelmed with activity, or bored.

Use volunteers when available. Usually, the ham does everything, for lack of volunteers.

Roles volunteers can fill:

- Volunteer coordinator.
- Runner to contact the ICP, area coordinator, etc.
- Scribe
- Crowd control "bouncer", as bystanders are curious and ask questions

SAR = search & rescue

DAT - damage assessment teams

ICP - incident command post

Prioritizing messages

Emergency = life or death matters, fires. State "Emergency [callsign].".

Priority = utility status, medical supplies, situations that will escalate if not dealt with promptly

Tags

Red tags = immediate care needed.

Yellow tags = less urgent.

Message Accuracy & Brevity

Think about what you'll say prior to communicating. Even better, write it down. Example of paring down excess verbiage:

Exercise

Actors:

- **DAT Team Leader**
- **Block Captain Bravo**
- **ICP EC6 GMRS Operator**
- **ICP EC6 Ham Operator**
- **EOC Ham Operator**
- **Ham NCS**
- **Scribe at EOC**
- **Scribe at EC6 ICP**

Scenario: A message coming up from the block. A Damage Assessment Team (DAT) finds a problem minutes after a large earthquake felt as MM8. The DAT teams have been sent out via FRS to survey their blocks.

The scene opens with the block **DAT team leader** calling block captain BRAVO on FRS.

DAT team leader: “Bravo Block Captain this is DAT Team Leader”

Block Captain Bravo: “DAT team Leader go”

DAT team leader: “There is a damaged house on Walnut Blvd. Boy, it’s a mess. The windows are crooked and the garage looks like it fell on a car. There are a bunch of neighbors outside blocking the street. They tell me a family of four lives there. I hear voices and a barking dog, but no one is coming to the door. Lights are on upstairs. Front door appears tilted, but house is on its foundation. It is a grey and red stucco house with purple trim I’m walking down the block now to see if anything else is damaged. Oh, and I smelled some gas. I can see a small fire and smoke noticed on Shrader.”

Block Captain Bravo: “What is the address?”

DAT team leader: “2333 Walnut Blvd”.

Block Captain Bravo: Roger. Please mark building appropriately and continue in your assessments. I am sending SAR Team”

DAT team leader: Roger. Will do

Block Captain Bravo on GMRS to EC6 ICP: “EC6 ICP from Block Captain Bravo with Priority Traffic”

EC6 ICP GMRS Op: "Block Captain Bravo Go"

Block Captain Bravo: "Moderate to severe damaged house 2333 Walnut Blvd X 1 to 4 trapped victims inside X Gas leak X Smoke and fire on Shrader and Walnut X Send light SAR team and light fire suppression team"

EC6 ICP GMRS Op: "Roger".

Block Captain Bravo: "Clear"

EC6 ICP GMRS Op: "Clear"

This message goes to the Message Center Manager and to the acting IC at EC6 ICP
The message center manager hands the following message to the Ham Net operator to be sent to the EOC

Ham Net Operator at EC6 ICP: "Emergency Traffic EC6 ICP"

NCS: "EC6 ICP list your Emergency Traffic"

EC6 ICP: one emergency for EOC

NCS: Call EOC on 146.475 and pass your traffic.

EC6 ICP: Going

On 14,475 MHz

EC6 ICP: EOC this is EC6 ICP with Emergency traffic

EOC: EC6 ICP this is EOC. Ready to copy"

EC6 ICP

"3 Emergency n6eeg 14 EC6 ICP at Lower Vista Valley 0206 Jan 6

To: IC EOC

Subject: Fire in EC6 Jan 6 0137

Break

Fire reported Walnut and Shrader

X light fire suppression team

Sent x possible injuries

Break

John Brown, IC EC6

End no more"

EOC: “Roger”

EC6 ICP: “Back to net”

EOC: "EOC Clear"

General Background Material

by Don Simon, NI6A

As message traffic moves as a two way street to and from the block neighborhood, teams to and from block neighborhood captain, and to and from the area ICP levels, messages at some level according to individual criteria will often be needed to be written down accurately and succinctly. The exception is tactical peer to peer traffic where both the originator and destination personnel are immediately present and can converse directly. Even if both parties are available to come to the radio simultaneously, a notation in the log (using ICS 309) is valuable for reference. If convenient, note the two stations involved, the time, date, location, and a very brief summary. Frankly speaking, such record-keeping is not very practical in a fast-moving situation with adverse conditions in the field.

At the block level, a single designated FRS channel can be used successfully for internal communication (intra-block). The effective range and needs must be mapped by the block lead/captain in advance and modified/customized if needed. Ideally, a block message center will be established wherein a second co-located GMRS operator will be able to relay any messages to the next level (a neighborhood or area-wide ICP connected on a GMRS network to a Ham Network through an INTER-AREA Message Center). Within the Area Division, the Area coordinator arranges the frequencies and procedures that are unique to his/her situation. The Ham Network, however, is coordinated by the KaroEcho Emergency Coordinator (EC).

Multiple blocks can thus coordinate resources for mutual aid, intra-block coordination, intra-area coordination, and traffic to and from the EOC. These messages must be triaged/prioritized by a trained message center manager who must decide where the message should be directed, on what channel or service, what essential information must be in the message (time/date stamps, valid to and from fields, etc.). Just as important, the message center manager must decide what should not be sent, such as frivolous adjectives, victims' personal data, unnecessary descriptors, wordiness, etc.

Long-distance comms can be sent via the ham networks while shorter distance comms can be sent via GMRS networks. Message center managers must be able to think on their feet. Headsets, earphones, lapel or shoulder mounted speaker mics with volume attenuated are

recommended.

Although it is common that a single Ham/GMRS operator will fill in as the scribe, the GMRS op, and the ham op, and message center manager (all in one) if there are no other volunteer resources available. Message Center managers should make their needs known to the Volunteer Resource Coordinator. In short, any radio communications hub is as efficient as the message center management.

Elmering

- We've had some inquiries that we need to address.
- Elmer@karoecho.net is the email address & google Group.
- There's also a Facebook group and info@karoecho.net.
- We need more volunteers to answer questions when they come in.
- Dave & Diane are doing some training soon.

Net activity reports

- See the newsletter for information about the growing neighborhood net activities.
- Rob reported that there were no participants at the last EC4 GMRS Net, and that he may switch the time so that it works for more people.
- Karen would like to know which groups are active so that she can send people to appropriate local nets. Subsequently, the additional information on all the local GMRS nets have been added to the KaroEcho website. Howdy ends up relaying Kensington people to Marina Bay on the West County Wednesday morning GMRS Net on channel 15 the first Wednesday of each month.
- Don confirmed that there's a very poor radio path between EC9 and Kensington due to terrain.
- Howdy doesn't have EC6 operators available, but can try to get something started.
- Karen wants to map out the groups; Howdy is listing them in the newsletter.
- Diane reported that she and David have done some training, and suggested inviting people to the August 19th class they'll hold.
- Edward has put together a [map of radio licensees in Kensington](#) and in [El Cerrito](#).

David requested that Howdy add information to the newsletter about the online testing for ham radio.

[Richmond CERT 1st Wed EmComm Net website](#)

CWS Drill

Chris Hilliard discussed the upcoming CWS (Community Warning System) drill, which will announce a faux emergency notification of evacuation in case of wildfire. CWS calls the landline, mobile, text, etc. They want to track how many people receive the alert, and whether we'd be able to volunteer if requested.

We should all work to get our neighbors registered.

In LaMorinda, they used the test to identify radio operators. It was a test of the capability of the warning system; penetration test; and verification of how much of the intended target they could reach. It gives them an indication of how many radio operators might respond in an emergency.

Opting in for alerts

- Landlines are automatically registered. For cell and email notifications, you need to [register](#).
- Mobiles may need to whitelist the number: all 0000000000.

See also the [KARO-ECHO Communications Plan](#), written by Don Simon (contains much info on notifications, CWS, NIXLE, etc).

Fall SET

Howdy wants input on how to handle a fall SET, and was curious to know what LUTB is doing. Diane reported that the LUTB group has not been meeting. Don confirmed that planning is in a lull.

The meeting was adjourned.